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The Captain's Dream

BY PAUL TYNER

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THE CAPTAIN'S DREAM.



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Sample

THE CAPTAIN'S DREAM

BY PAUL TYNER

THIS story was told by the man who had lived it—told one evening after dinner, in the smoking room of a Pacific Mail steamer, between Panama and San Francisco. We were then ten days out and it was about ten days more to port. No one expected a story from the Captain. Not that he was unsociable. But he certainly had about him an indefinable air of reserve that bordered on the mysterious and somehow set him apart from ordinary people. He might have been an Eastern prince traveling in mufti, yet he

listened amiably enough to the chatter at table and to the smoking-room discussion of people and places, or of the comparative merits of various brands of claret or cigars. He even occasionally put in a quiet word or two of appreciation that flattered the talker of the hour into thinking himself a really deep and clever fellow.

No longer young and yet not old, the Captain was easily on a sympathetic footing both with the youngsters and with the old fellows,—otherwise divided into separate camps, holding each other in affectionate contempt. He played chess occasionally with the ubiquitous Englishman. More than that, he did not disdain an occasional hand at draw with the Americans. Nothing could be more amiable than the smiling good humor with which he always lost the ten-dollar gold piece he invested in chips, and which was his invariable limit. It endeared him to even the inveterate "poker fiends." He was always on deck at sunrise, and an old lady, who had secretly followed him one morning, spread the report

that he was a sun-worshiper. Between breakfast and lunch, he lounged in his chair on deck, reading with an air of luxurious enjoyment—mostly paper covered novels, French, Spanish or English—for he seemed as much at home in one of these languages as in the others. These novels he read when he was not silently gazing out to sea with an expression of perfect peace on his handsome bronzed and bearded face.

A quiet, thoughtful man was the Captain, clearly with a mind of his own and one rich in resources that freed him from dependence on any other companionship than that of his own thoughts, however he might choose to trifle with the various expedients to which the average traveler turns for time-killing on ship-board. He never spoke to any one after sunset,—that is to say he had not spoken in the evening until the particular evening of this story.

We had been steaming three days through a dead calm accompanied by intense heat, which was beginning to tell on the spirits of the passengers.

It was very evident that the little smoking-room company was suffering from dullness. Not a man had a yarn left unspun. No one had energy enough to propose a game of any kind. Reading was out of the question. It was unanimously agreed that there was nothing for it but to drink brandy and soda, while muttering maledictions on the weather or complaining of the pernicious effect of sea air on good tobacco.

"Such is life," drawled a little Frenchman in his most pessimistic tone. "We start out on the great voyage buoyant with hope. Everything goes swimmingly for a while and we seem born to have what you Americans call a good time. Soon the day arrives when we have exhausted the limited possibilities of any real enjoyment in life—when we find that there is really nothing new under the sun. A dead calm succeeds, in which we vainly seek to find renewal of old illusions in one youthful folly or another. But life has lost its savor. Nothing tastes good. Existence is spelled en-

durance, until death, at last, mercifully ends all."

Parisian of the Parisians, the speaker was a clever and charming man of the world,—traveled, well read,—a physician who had dabbled in politics, a soldier who had had his baptism of blood in China or Africa, it doesn't matter which; a connoisseur who was also something of a painter and musician; a scholar not without pretensions to familiarity with jurisprudence and philosophy.

"May be there are some possibilities you have not yet exhausted." The speaker was an Englishman, and there was just the suspicion of a sneer in his tone. "Suppose," he went on with Anglican superiority, "suppose you try a yachting expedition to the North pole, or riding to hounds, or tiger shooting in India, or have a go after the big game of the Rockies. These are things that are more apt to stir the blood than baccarat at the club, or your little suppers with ballet girls after the opera."

"English blood, perhaps," rejoined

the Frenchman. "We Latins passed through that stage ages ago. Besides, I *have* hunted men in Africa and Tsin Tsin—and there's no fiercer or more treacherous game in jungle or mountain wild, I assure you. No, the modern man who lives up to his opportunities soon reaches the end of the story, and, with it, of all zest in life. It's awful, I know; but it's true. I'd give the world for a new sensation,—but after a man's forty there isn't any."

It was at this point that the Captain broke into the conversation, to our general astonishment, as may be imagined. Looking steadily into the Frenchman's eyes with a curious expression, he said very slowly:

"If I should tell you of a sensation that came to me quite fresh when I was past forty, it might do you some good. I had an experience once, or rather dreamed I had an experience, which has always seemed very remarkable to me. It may interest you to hear it."

The Captain paused and resumed his cigar, while his eyes half closed as

if to gather his thoughts. He had addressed himself especially to the Frenchman. But, the ice having been broken, we brightened at the prospect of an unveiling of the "mystery" we had agreed must surround our strange fellow passenger. Now all turned to him eagerly.

"A story! And of direful dreams and gruesome ghosts; by all means let us have it," exclaimed one.

"A tale of the deep sea and ships in the night," cried a second voice.

"Ten to one it's a love story with a duel in it," whispered one betting man to another.

"A story without a moral, let us hope," chipped in the Frenchman in his dry, hard manner.

"That's as you take it," replied the Captain promptly. "It is simply the story of a dream, and such stuff as dreams are made of."

Without other preliminary than a few puffs at his cigar, he went on, still addressing himself to the Frenchman and apparently ignoring his other auditors.

“I was born at sea, of a race of sailors and with a passionate love for the sea in my blood. My father was a wealthy merchant in the South American and Californian trade, and was good enough to help me gratify my desire for a sea-faring career. When little more than a boy, I had sailed from New York 'round the Horn to San Francisco and back, before the mast, on one of my father's ships. I was determined to learn all the ropes, from the bottom round up. At twenty, I was first mate of an A. No. 1 clipper-built ship, one of the finest and swiftest in the trade. At twenty-two, I succeeded to its command and was besides given a considerable interest in the business, which my father, retiring, had turned over to two home-staying brothers and myself. In those days there was brisk competition between the various packet lines. Fortunes often depended on the difference of a day, sometimes of an hour, in reaching port. So there was some excitement in the business, and no small call for the development of skill and

judgment on the part of the skipper who would hold his own. Well, at twenty-five, when my first great misfortune came, I was happy, rich, living the life I loved, and at the head of my chosen profession. Then I—I lost my ship."

There was a perceptible break in the Captain's voice as he uttered the last three words. A few vigorous puffs at his cigar helped to recover his self-possession and he continued.

"We were struck by a furious gale that came up suddenly in the Caribbean, on the voyage homeward bound from Rio with coffee. The masts went by the board in no time, her timbers were sprung amidships and she settled so rapidly that we had barely time to take to the boats before she went down. The first boat launched was swamped by a heavy sea and all on board drowned. I got off in the second boat with eight of my crew and reached the Honduras coast more dead than alive, after three days of battling with wind and wave, hunger and thirst.

"I wonder if you understand what the loss of my ship meant to me and why it nearly broke my heart and made me wish for death? You may not have experienced the exact sensation, but perhaps one like it. The failure or mistake of the successful man is the unforgivable sin. It is fatal. Bacon knew its bitterness, as did Wolsey on his downfall; Napoleon knew what it meant after Waterloo, and Warren Hastings on his impeachment. It is understood by every statesman who has risen and fallen on the tide of popular favor; by the speculator who had always been on the right side of the market until the market fell on him and crushed him; by the author whose last book falls flat, after he has been hailed a genius; by the singer whose voice breaks while singing his favorite aria before a crowded house at the zenith of his career; by the artist when the picture on which he counted to gain the gold medal is damned with the faint praise of an honorable mention; by the jockey who had 'never lost a race' when he, at last, loses the

race of his life. But why multiply instances?"

"Yes; I know," assented the Frenchman reflectively.

The Captain's cigar had almost gone out and required his particular attention. At the same time, he eyed his chosen auditor curiously out of the corner of one eye. His teeth gritted as he went on, with an effort at deliberation.

"There are some failures which a man, and even his friends, may be deluded into the hope of wiping out. But the man who loses his ship is spared any such illusion. He knows, and the world knows, at once that his failure is final, hopeless, irrevocable. His professional career, (and there is no other career that takes such a hold on the heart), is utterly and instantly blasted forever. Call it superstition, if you will; but no owner would trust his ship, no merchant his cargo, no passenger his life, to the commander who has once lost a ship. So I gave up sailing, drew out my share of the business in money and went abroad.

I was young and would try to interest myself in travel and in science, for which I had some taste. Five years I spent in study and journeyings in Europe and the East. Denied to me as a career, the sea still holds my heart. I am never unhappy now; but I am most happy when I am on ship-board. It was during a voyage home from India that I fell in love——”

Here the big cigar claimed the narrator's exclusive attention for a moment.

“But I need say nothing more about that,” he went on hastily. “It is a sensation you also know very well, I presume.”

“Um,” said the Frenchman.

“On another trip,” proceeded the Captain,—“it was on this very steamer, going south—I made the acquaintance of an old California miner and prospector and was able to be of some service to him. He put me in the way of acquiring and developing the gold mines in Costa Rica from which we are now shipping about two thousand ounces per month. The ore was con-

sidered so refractory as to be impossible of reduction, but my studies at Freiburg helped me, in time, to work out a new and very satisfactory method of treatment. That was a sensation worth having, quite aside from the monetary value of the discovery."

"The elation of the discoverer is happiness while it lasts," admitted the Frenchman.

"Costa Rica brings me to the remarkable experience I referred to, and I have only inflicted so much of my previous personal history on you because I believe it necessary to a proper understanding of what follows. During my second year at the mines, I came down with a fever which threatened to end in congestion of the brain. We had a sensible young doctor in camp,—the company surgeon. From the start, he declared that my recovery depended more on care than on doctoring. Luckily he knew a young woman, then in San Jose, only a few hours ride from our place. A remarkable young woman! I certainly owe very much to her. Born in Costa Rica, of an English

father and Spanish mother, she was educated in New York and after leaving school, made up her mind to adopt the profession of a nurse, fitting herself by a course of training at the Bellevue school. The doctor had met her while she was engaged in the hospital, during his student days, and insisted that she had always exhibited an extraordinary influence over her patients. When I fell ill, she happened to be on a vacation visit to her family and we were fortunate enough to secure her services.

"Trained nurses are not easily obtained in Costa Rica. Quick, tireless, thoughtful and attentive—all these she was in an unusual degree. But there was something more. It must have been her eyes, I now think. Large, soft, dark and lustrous eyes they were, with a compelling faith in their expression—a restful certainty and decision in their quiet depths. She took me in hand as completely as if I had been a baby, and I resigned myself to her charge with an immense sense of trust.

"On the ninth day of the fever—a critical period in the disorder—I had

been very restless and had suffered acutely from a persistent attack of headache. As evening came on, the fever increased and with it my restlessness. In this pain and fever, a passionate longing for the sea took possession of me. For hours the patient nurse had been bathing my face and hands and moistening my parched lips. But it seemed as if nothing but the ocean would quench the burning fires that consumed me. Finally, she sat down near the head of the bed and said in a quiet, firm voice: 'You are now going to sleep and will wake free from pain.' Then, fixing those large dark eyes on mine the while, she began stroking my head. There was steady assurance in her concentrated, but smiling and easy, gaze; quiet and healing in the touch of her long white hands. Soon I ceased struggling. In utter exhaustion, my eyes closed and I fell into a deep sleep.

"I woke in the gray dawn to find the nurse still watching beside me. She smiled as she rose and placed a glass of water to my lips.

" 'You have slept,' she said.

"It was the first time in more than a week that I had slept through the night. I was very weak, but the sense of freedom from pain and of a strange, moist coolness in all my body was delightful. With an answering smile, I said, 'Yes, I have slept as sleep the happy dead and dreamed a happy dream; I have come from Davy Jones' locker.'

"She laughed. My pillows had been smoothed as only she could smooth them and her hand rested lightly on my brow. 'You have no fever,' she announced. And this pleasing verdict was at once confirmed by the thermometer. From that moment, I began to mend and soon was my old self—or rather my new self. I have always had a curious feeling as of having been reborn that night.

"When the doctor came he was much surprised by the nurse's report. 'This is very strange,' he said. 'I did not expect to see you free from fever for four days yet, at the best. And your condition last night did not lead

me to look for the best. It must be that girl.'

" 'That girl' came into the room as he spoke and both blushed. To cover his confusion, he congratulated her warmly on my improvement. She turned his compliments aside, declaring that it was my dream that brought me around.

" 'You must tell us the dream as soon as you are stronger,' he declared. The doctor and his wife are my dear friends, but I have never felt any impulse to tell the dream to any one until now."

Here the Captain again looked curiously at the Frenchman and blew wreaths of smoke towards the ceiling.

II.

IN THE OCEAN'S DEPTHS.

From this point on, the Captain spoke in a changed voice, indeed, as if in a dream,—the words seeming to come from a distance, although his utterance was perfectly clear and distinct, so that not a syllable was lost

by his hearers, who were now all drawn into a closeness of attention and interest, strongly in contrast with the listlessness that marked their faces earlier in the evening.

"I did not know if I had died," said the Captain, "or if I had ever lived before or in any other element. All I knew was that I was very much alive in that moment of coming to consciousness in the depths of the sea. There are single moments in every man's life when he lives more than in all the years beside. This was such a moment in my life. It marked a turning point,—yet not so much an ending as a beginning. An instant realization of the meaning of all the past came to me in the emotion of this moment, in which was concentrated an eternity of experience. For these great moments are always moments of emotion; often of intense emotion, interpreted to the consciousness by distinct and definite sensation. Sometimes it is pain,—as often it is pleasure. The feeling may find little or no outward expression, yet be deep and in-

tense inwardly,—a sensation more of the soul than of the body. I knew I lived in the first moment of this birth of mine deep down in the sea, because I sensed life as I had never sensed it before,—I who had been so tired of life! Now it was good to be alive. Life was indeed sweet. Ah, the unutterable rapture of this great stillness and coolness! How grateful to every sense the moisture that flowed above and beneath me in silent caress! How delicious the wetness that lovingly laved my limbs! A conscious, living thing it was, surely,—holding me in its embrace with such wealth of tenderness.

“For a long time, as it seemed, I hardly moved, remembering nothing, regretting nothing,—fearing nothing,—simply pervaded in every atom of being by the sweetness of these still waters. I rested like a tired infant on its mother’s breast—rested in the babe’s perfect confidence in perfect love.

“O, Venus Aphrodite! O, Mary Queen of the Sea, Mother of Heaven

and Earth, Mother of Stars and Men.
O, Universal Mother, unfailing fountain of all love and beauty, human and divine,—Source of all strength, all sweetness, all quietness and all patient sureness of Woman!

“Some such form as this my thought took, worshiping that which I felt in intensest realization.

“With this deep peacefulness and rest, a sense of growing strength soon stole into every nerve and muscle. Siezed with something of the swimmer's passionate delight in the most graceful of motions, I moved through the waters with easy stroke and swift, now swimming boldly on side or breast, then floating idly on my back, or turning over and over with all the abandon of a frolicsome boy. Occasionally I plunged into the ocean's further depths. Down, down, I dived, for miles, as it seemed. In this shoreless, soundless sea, no bottom, no top, no barriers nor limits on any side hemmed me in or barred my progress. Only my own free will halted my advance in any direction,

"There was no other than I in all this watery world; yet, I did not feel lonesome or afraid. Presently it was borne in upon my consciousness that I was really not alone. For I knew that all the coolness and sweetness and rest, all the vastness and power of the mighty deep,—all its completeness,—pervaded my being, was mine, was me! I knew also that my conscious enjoyment of this great ocean pervaded every drop of its waters; that I flowed through all its vastness. I was not separated by a hair's breadth from my own, nor my own from me.

"Something of this feeling of perfect freedom and confidence doubtless arose from a vivid realization that I was entirely at home in these silent depths. Had I not lived here aeons upon aeons? Before and after birth into form and personality, these great waters in all their fullness, as in every drop, had been my habitation,—the body of my spirit. Here had been my home for a period of time so long that my absence appeared but as a day in a million years,—brief and vague as the fleeting

impression of a dream in the night. Back to Chaos and Old Night I had come; to the waters over and under the earth, without form, and void. Yet, out of that vague, brief, dreamy absence, I seemed to bring back conscious recognition of infinite diversity in this infinite unity; of an absolute and unerring order ever being drawn out of this chaos; of unending progression of life-forms ever contained in this Formless Life, and which it is ever bringing forth—itsself the One Life ever flowing into and through all forms.

“Thinking of this absence, which now seemed as a dream in the night, I remembered that I had been troubled by a foolish sense of separation from the living waters of the great sea. I remembered and laughed at my folly. Separation from that which filled the universe in every atom! From this boundless ocean! As well suppose a man separated from the blood that flowed through all his veins, from his own heart, from his very soul! To be so separated, surely, would mean not to be,—and so without cause or capacity

for consciousness, either of pain or pleasure. Such sense of separateness, I was now convinced, could not be the sense of a reality, but only the vain imagining of man's heart,—a temporary forgetfulness of the all-encompassing waters so filled with life, and joy and peace beyond all understanding. Foolish fancy! Yet, what other or better cause can there be for anguish of soul and weariness of the flesh than even a momentary and mistaken sense of separateness, when the full and bounding sense of closeness, of oneness, I now enjoyed, held such completeness of strength and happiness? Never again should I forget this glorious presence. However far I might travel, and in whatever direction, sleeping or waking, I should always hold to the great fact that this sea of life enfolded me always and everywhere—that Man cannot be where the Sea is not.

“Even while these thoughts passed through my mind, I was rising rapidly into thinner, warmer waters. It was as if the joy of rest had given birth to a

new joy in activity. Presently, I came to the surface—to the meeting place of air and ocean that marked the separation, or rather the union, of the world's upper and under waters.

“It was night,—a beautiful night. Hardly a ripple stirred the surface of the sea. Brightly burning constellations shone through the still, balmy air, and gave me my bearings. How often had I sailed those very seas! Far above my head flamed the Southern Cross. It was on just such a night, years ago, that a great gladness had come into my heart,—a gladness only too soon turned to hopeless despair more bitter than death. Yet, now I thought of her without a shade of reproach; not as in the old days before she turned from me, yet with nothing of the dull heartache that had so long been part of my life. It was strange to realize that it was so no longer. Had I left that heartache in the depths of the sea? Love her still? Yes, with all my heart,—but not in the old way, somehow. Now, I was content in lov-

ing—content that her love was another's as I should be were it mine.

“Suddenly a ship loomed out of the darkness. At the same moment the sweetest sound in all the world broke on my ears. The vessel came nearer. I could see the smoke pouring from her funnels and streaming behind her like a great black plume. Through the open hatchway glared her furnace fires. The lights that gleamed from her portholes were broken into myriad reflections in the dancing waters of this night sea. Now the voice rose clearer. Yes, it was indeed the voice of my early love, my lost love. For a moment I grew heartsick with longing. She was singing and singing the same old song, in the same rich contralto and with the same sympathetic tenderness of expression that had first won my heart. No one had ever heard her sing thus without being deeply touched,—yet no two hearers were affected in precisely the same way. What a world of soul she threw into the simple words and simpler melody of the ballad! To me, when I first heard her sing, it

brought a sense of melting sweetness, but with this a strange sharp pain at the heart—premonition perhaps of sorrow to come. He—he had been my friend and is now her husband—he said the song brought before his eyes a spring landscape, whose tender green of grass and foliage showed faintly through the mysterious, thickening shadows of the half light; a landscape already still and cold in the foreground, but warmed towards the horizon by the last crimson rays of the setting sun. He afterwards painted the picture for her, and people said it was a canvas that sang to the soul of heaven's glories; a picture that lifted the mind from the passing things of earth to the eternal realities of spirit; a vision filled with mystic inspiration. He refused to exhibit the painting, although urged to do so by his brother artists. I saw it once, over my sweetheart's piano,—and it hurt me. The artist had put himself into his picture, as the singer had put herself in the song. Nay, more, it seemed to my jealous eyes as if the souls of singer and painter had

been blended in his colors. Soon after this it was that we parted.

"So close was I to the steamer now, that I could hear other voices—the voices of two men on the bridge. The captain and his second officer were conversing in low tones. A note of anxiety in the Captain's voice caught my attention and I listened.

"‘Yes,’ he was saying, evidently in answer to the mate's congratulations on the favoring weather thus far encountered, ‘yes, we are lucky to get out of the Carribean without meeting a squall; but there is another danger.’ Here his voice sank still lower. ‘Keep a sharp lookout for a floating wreck. A big hull floating bottom upward, only a mile or two off our course, has been reported several times in the last six months. That big steam yacht, the *Arethusa*, must have struck this wreck. You remember several of her people were picked up and brought to New York by the *Para* when we were last in port. They said she struck a rock which stove a hole in her bottom, sinking her inside of ten minutes. Well,

there's no such rock on the charts, and I feel damned sure she struck that half-sunken wreck. So ring the engineer to slow down after the moon goes. If we *do* hit this wreck, let us hit her easy. I shall turn in now, but call me anything is sighted. I'll take the next watch.'

"Danger ! Yes, I knew it, for I had passed this very wreck on my way to the steamer, and was even then struck momentarily by the thought of the menace it meant to passing vessels. Straight away, and less than three knots ahead, right in the steamer's course, my eyes, sharper now than those of the lookout, spied a long black mass floating in the water. The gentle roll of the sea would hide it at night from ordinary eyes, even when close upon it. Ten minutes more, and, if nothing intervened, the steamer would strike this death trap. Sould she come upon it under full head of steam, as she was now sailing, the doom of all on board would be certain. There would be no time to take to the boats.

"Again the voice of the singer rang out on the still air :

"'It were best that I should leave you ;
Best for you and best for me.'

"She was only a few steps away, there in the saloon of the steamer, singing to her own accompaniment. Again I was seized by that heartsick longing. Again that summer night in the southern sea so long ago rose up before me. The sweet delicate scent of lavender filled my nostrils ; her hair brushed my face ; my soul thrilled at the touch of her lips. I would have moved in the direction of the saloon, meaning to get just one glimpse of her, —a last glimpse. In the same instant another thought turned me back. The Captain's words again smote my ears with terrible meaning : 'Stove a hole in her bottom and sunk within ten minutes.'

"And no one but I in all the world to save her ! I must save her ; I should save her ! For that I had come from the ends of the earth, from the depths of the sea, from the mouth of hell, from the gates of death. Away !

Before the ship's prow I darted with lightning speed. In a moment more I had reached the wreck—a great liner, floating bottom upward. Back I dived into the ocean's depths. This massive dead hulk, scarce stirring in the calm waters that played over her so serenely, must be moved—moved to a safe distance out of the coming vessel's course. And there were only fast lessening minutes for the task. Now I was alive, indeed! Quickly, silently, surely, I reached the deck, mounted the bridge, and had my hands on the wheel. What though the vessel and all about her seemed to have fallen into a deep, death-like sleep? All should waken instantly, now I was in command. *God had given me another ship!* And this ship should be manned, if its ghostly crew must be summoned from the ocean's depths, from the centre of the earth, or from the most distant star! Already fires glowed under the boilers. Never before was steam gotten up so quickly. The screw was revolving as if with throbbing consciousness of all that depended on its speed. From

deck and engine room an instant 'Aye, aye, Sir' echoed to the orders that rang from my lips. Aloft and below, fore and aft, every man was doing his duty; every signal bell was answered; all hands were at attention. Silent, swift-moving, vaporous phantoms they seemed; but there was a grim reality in the purposeful determination that animated each and spoke the oneness of crew with commander.

"I had found the old ship's stem pointing directly towards the coming steamer. With the first revolutions of the propeller, I had veered her head about a dozen points to port, intending to pass the other steamer a safe hundred yards to starboard. About half this course had been covered, when I heard the swish of the other steamer's bows cutting the water beneath us and not more than two hundred yards away. For one awful moment, I was shaken by an anxious, a terribly anxious question.

"In the five minutes since I had left her, might not the other steamer also have veered,—and to starboard?"

"Merciful heaven! Were we to collide? Instead of saving the steamer and all on board,—instead of saving the woman I loved,—was I to be the means of sending them to destruction? I nerved myself to meet the worst. But this suspense only lasted a moment. It was broken by the husky voice of the lookout on our bows singing out: 'Ship on the weather bow! Well to starboard! Ship sailing bottom upward!'

"Thank God! She had, then, kept on her course, straight as an arrow. Now we were passing at a safe distance. The woman I loved was saved!

"And again I saw the steamer's lights and heard voices.

"'What's that big black thing churning the sea to starboard?' called the officer on the bridge to the lookout.

"'Only porpoises, sir,' was the confident reply.

"'Gad; it's lucky we didn't strike that porpoise,' muttered the second officer to himself with unction.

"Once more, and for the last time, the music of that one voice in all the world came to me through the still waters, as

we passed each other,—the ship of the living in the moonlight, and the ship of the dead in the darkness. Surely, I may feel that, unconsciously to herself perhaps, the song was fraught with a message of hope and comfort to my heart. It was Tosti's 'Good Night,' sung O; so tenderly and sweetly! There was something in the vibration of her voice, too, which told me all was well with her, that she was happy. And since all was well with her, all was surely well with me. I was glad that she lived, and happy that she was happy.

"'Good night, Beloved,' was my answering thought; 'good night and God bless you!'

"'Good night and God bless you,' was echoed in a sort of whispering chorus from my loyal crew, now filing past me in ghostly procession and disappearing below. I had let go of the wheel automatically when the danger was passed. At the same moment the fires went out in the engine room and the screw was once more still. The attention of all on board had relaxed.

Ship and crew seemed to be melting into thin water.

"At the last moment, an odd thing happened. Odd things happen in dreams,—real dreams,—things inconsistent and absurd and altogether calculated to mar the artistic harmonies of a story, when you come to tell the dream. But it must not be left out, if you are to have the dream as it occurred.

"Just as the last of the men had passed me, I heard one, a big and jolly old tar say with a chuckle :

"'It's not for nothing we're piped on deck from Davy Jones' locker; eh, Bill?' And he nudged Bill in the ribs knowingly, while a powerful wink suggested much interior meaning of some sort in the remark.

"But his mate, a surly old sea dog, not given to joking, growled back with an unmistakable air of annoyance :

"'Wot I wants to know is whether things have come to such a purty pass that dead men must get out of the way for living men, instead of letting the living get out of the way of the dead?'

"‘Guess it depends on wot the Cap’n wants,’ replied the jovial tar, scratching his head; ‘Orders is orders.’

* * * * *

"‘And that is why I told the nurse I had come from Davy Jones’ locker,’ concluded the Captain with an odd smile."

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—I. Cor. xv., 26.

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